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SUBJECT: INAPPROPRIATE USE OF ELECTRONIC MAIL (E-MAIL)

A. TITLE 5, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, PART 2635, "STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH"

B. DOD REGULATION 5500.7-R, JOINT ETHICS REGULATION, SECTION 2-301.

C. ASD (C3I) MEMORANDUM, SUBJECT: USE OF DOD INFORMATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS, DATED FEBRUARY 1, 1997.

1. PURPOSE. THIS MESSAGE EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOWING APPLICABLE LAW AND DOD AND ARMY POLICIES IN USING ELECTRONIC MAIL (E-MAIL) TO ENSURE THAT INAPPROPRIATE USE OF ARMY E-MAIL SERVICES DOES NOT DISRUPT ARMY AND DEFENSE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS.

2. APPLICABILITY. THIS MESSAGE APPLIES ARMY-WIDE TO ALL ARMY E-MAIL USERS, SERVICE PROVIDERS, NETWORK ADMINISTRATORS, AND SYSTEM OWNERS.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES.

A. PURSUANT TO REFERENCES A THROUGH C AND ANY LOCALLY PROMULGATED E-MAIL POLICIES, ARMY COMMANDERS AND SUPERVISORS AT ALL LEVELS SHOULD MAKE ANYONE USING THE E-MAIL SYSTEM AWARE OF PERMISSIBLE AND UNAUTHORIZED USES OF ARMY E-MAIL. ARMY E-MAIL USERS MUST KNOW THAT INAPPROPRIATE USE OF ARMY E-MAIL SYSTEMS MAY BE A BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST SOLDIERS AND CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES.

B. CONSISTENT WITH REFERENCES A THROUGH C, ARMY E-MAIL USERS SHOULD USE E-MAIL RESOURCES RESPONSIBLY AND ABIDE BY NORMAL STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL COURTESY AND CONDUCT AT ALL TIMES. IN PARTICULAR, ARMY E-MAIL OR OTHER TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS WILL NOT BE USED IN A WAY THAT WOULD INTERFERE WITH OFFICIAL DUTIES, UNDERMINE READINESS, REFLECT ADVERSELY ON DOD OR THE ARMY (SUCH AS USES INVOLVING PORNOGRAPHY; CHAIN LETTERS; UNOFFICIAL ADVERTISING, SOLICITING OR SELLING VIA E-MAIL; AND OTHER USES THAT ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH PUBLIC SERVICE), OR FURTHER ANY UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY.

C. AS PROVIDED IN REFERENCE B, USERS OF ARMY E-MAIL SERVICES WILL NOT USE THESE SERVICES IN A MANNER THAT OVERBURDENS ARMY TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS. USERS SHOULD NOT SEND E-MAIL THAT COULD REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO CAUSE, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, EXCESSIVE STRAIN ON ANY COMPUTING FACILITIES, OR UNWARRANTED OR UNSOLICITED INTERFERENCE WITH OTHERS' USE OF E-MAIL OR E-MAIL SYSTEMS. SUCH INTERFERING USES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO, THE USE OF E-MAIL SERVICES TO:

- (1) SEND E-MAIL CHAIN LETTERS;
- (2) "SPAM," THAT IS, EXPLOITING LISTSERVERS OR SIMILAR GROUP BROADCAST SYSTEMS FOR PURPOSES BEYOND THEIR INTENDED SCOPE TO PROVIDE WIDESPREAD DISTRIBUTION OF UNSOLICITED E-MAIL;
- (3) BROADCAST UNNECESSARY ADVERTISEMENTS OF ARMY SERVICES;
- (4) "LETTER-BOMB," THAT IS, TO SEND THE SAME E-MAIL REPEATEDLY TO ONE OR MORE RECIPIENTS TO INTERFERE WITH THE RECIPIENT'S USE OF E-MAIL;
- (5) BROADCAST E-MAIL MESSAGES OF DAILY QUOTATIONS, JOKES, OR OTHER SIMILAR TRANSMISSIONS;

(6) BROADCAST UNSUBSTANTIATED VIRUS WARNINGS FROM SOURCES OTHER THAN SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS; AND,
(7) DIRECTING MESSAGES TO LARGE AUDIENCES AND SENDING REPEATS OF THE SAME MESSAGES AS "REMINDERS."

D. ALL E-MAIL USERS MUST BE AWARE THAT REFERENCE B, SECTIONS 2-301.A(3) AND (4), ADDRESSES COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY ISSUES, AND ADVISES THEM: OF THEIR CONSENT TO MONITORING; OF RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSMITTING CLASSIFIED INFORMATION OVER UNSECURED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS; OF PROHIBITIONS REGARDING RELEASE OF ACCESS INFORMATION SUCH AS PASSWORDS; AND OF THE NEED FOR CARE WHEN TRANSMITTING OTHER SENSITIVE INFORMATION. ARMY E-MAIL USERS SHOULD ABIDE BY THESE RESTRICTIONS TO ENSURE THAT SECURITY COMPROMISES DO NOT DISRUPT ARMY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS.

E. USERS SHOULD SUBMIT COMPLAINTS ABOUT INAPPROPRIATE ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSIONS TO SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS OF E-MAIL SYSTEMS. SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS AND DETERMINE THEIR VALIDITY. IF AN INAPPROPRIATE USE DID OCCUR, THE SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR WILL INFORM THE SOLDIER/EMPLOYEE'S IMMEDIATE COMMANDER/SUPERVISOR, WHO SHOULD CONSIDER APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY OR OTHER CORRECTIVE ACTION.

5. SUMMARY. ALL E-MAIL USERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO AVOID ELECTRONIC MESSAGES SENT TO LARGE GROUPS OF E-MAIL USERS THAT COULD BE BETTER TARGETED TO A SMALLER POPULATION. CONSCIENTIOUS USE OF ARMY E-MAIL SYSTEMS WILL AVOID OVERBURDENING COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS AND AVOID MAKING IT NECESSARY TO USE SCARCE ARMY RESOURCES TO ELIMINATE SERVICE DISRUPTIONS THAT COULD BE EASILY AVOIDED. COMMANDERS AND ACTIVITY HEADS SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER LOCAL POLICIES ON THE USE OF E-MAIL NEED TO BE FORMULATED OR UPDATED TO IMPLEMENT THE GUIDANCE PROVIDED IN REFERENCES A THROUGH C, AND TO AVOID THE TYPES OF PROBLEMS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

APPROVED BY:
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